

# Bard

Bard College  
**Bard Digital Commons**

---

Robert Kelly Manuscripts

Robert Kelly Archive

---

5-2010

mayF2010

Robert Kelly  
*Bard College*

Follow this and additional works at: [http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk\\_manuscripts](http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts)

---

## Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "mayF2010" (2010). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 472.  
[http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk\\_manuscripts/472](http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/472)

This Manuscript is brought to you for free and open access by the Robert Kelly Archive at Bard Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Robert Kelly Manuscripts by an authorized administrator of Bard Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@bard.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@bard.edu).

# Bard

= = = = =

Finding things that are lost

as Dante tells, a pebble – small  
white stone I think – albestone – all  
best one – can get lost in  
the sweetest grass

or in your also hair I sometimes lose  
a sense of myself and time passes

then we are wading through the grass  
looking for lost keys or you find a pencil  
the keys get found, the pencil  
writes this down,

it is like a play,  
Jack gets his Jill, the night fits neatly into the dawn  
and people like to be smilingly  
quiet over breakfast,  
studying the coffee in the cup  
as if something had gotten lost in the depths.

16 May 2010

= = = = =

To be in heaven is to be old.  
For all your youthful beauty  
ardent enterprise of every  
moment you have only now.  
Now and almost infinite  
memory and no future at all.

Whatever you think about  
ahead of time will not happen,  
you've used it up already.

17 May 2010

= = = = =

To become the places near you  
all the time prevaricating  
because an answer needs you—

gods come down to humans to learn the future.

We know what is to come.  
Look hard inside and know it.  
We have sold ourselves not cheaply  
to a Buyer who installs us in language  
the longest museum of all. . .

and I answered Homer  
(whose name is naught but  
Hebrew *omer*, 'he spoke',  
a little Greek'd)  
You are the one who spoke  
whose mouth first meant  
these sounds we take for meanings  
and a war, a woman even  
and a river angry and the gods  
divided,

he said There is  
no destiny but what I spoke  
until you speak,  
one word cracks  
the shell of another  
and the way things are  
changes, the word  
changes how things seem—  
we know no difference  
between is and seem,  
you dream now you wake and right this down.

17 May 2010

= = = = =

But how much is true  
broken flowerpots  
back into red earth  
clay crumble,  
                    unglazed revert  
to their *substantial soil*  
                                    their first instruction.

What do we do?  
The sexual taxonomy  
of desire indifference repulsion  
writes us into bleak relationships.

Draw a map of what you want  
and see how large the rest of the world is—  
the shadow from which your death is coming.

He rows upstream  
such an animal in him  
makes him he is

no who about it  
he is entity, not identity.

17 May 2010

= = = = =

Morning grass, Melchizedek  
sunlight fading in and out  
here forever, waits for us to notice,  
waits for us to know.

17 May 2010

= = = = =

*for Aviv*

I have stood at the open grave  
from which monks lifted long ago  
the corpse of Arthur—bigger far  
than men were then or men now are.

They said it was the king, by size  
alone you could be sure. But my own  
awe was for the place itself,  
bare sky among the ruined abbey—  
a separate awe I saved for the king

for he is living still  
my instincts tell me  
in a lake far west  
of anywhere at all  
not far from here.

**17 May 2010**



## **RIVER**

Only by running away  
is it always here

We are such strange people.

18 May 2010

= = = = =

silk flowers  
and the opposite  
out there  
heaven is  
so many ways.

18 May 2010

= = = = =

Sometimes I can't turn  
the pages fast enough  
it must be here somewhere  
the word you meant me to find  
when you made language up—  
the optional necessity  
we have to choose and choose.  
But if you are not there  
I am not speaking.

18 May 2010

= = = = =

I want to be out there  
just walking around  
in the gentle seasons  
between lilacs and hydrangeas

there should be a name  
for everything but I want  
just once to walk around

I yearn for it the way  
some old people keep wishing  
they were back in college  
learning what they once  
thought was important.

18 May 2010

= = = = =

Sometimes I think  
or just once I thought  
if I could forget how to spell  
I could really learn to write.

18 May 2010

= = = = =

I am Osiris the self-widowed

I am large and long but have no weight  
all air inside, I float.

The fish the English call the bream  
has swallowed my genitals  
and sure enough the sea is fertile now  
all salt and spermy.

But me,  
the thing the English call "I".  
I lie on my back and look at the sun  
and the sun looked down on my scooped-out body  
still oozing blood a little and we plan,  
a man who looks at the sun  
is always planning something—  
the sun is trying to become a mouth  
to suck the whole of me up  
into the old stone age caverns  
of its dark meanings that lurk  
behind its upbeat remarks.

Sometimes I say the wrong names  
and that slows down the process.

The air feels good. but feeling  
too slows down the process.

Still, there is a process

and by its mercy soon  
I will be lifted through this air  
into the synagogue between me and heaven—  
the learned will discuss me there  
and the wife I had will grow  
impatient with their subtleties—  
when they have finished understanding me  
she will take me home through the moongate  
and that will be the end of naming things.

19 May 2010

= = = = =

The wind  
a little  
while in leaves  
then not.

19.V.10



= = = = =

Heart in India  
head in hipboots  
though, though tide  
is never right  
it still is there,  
*ichthyoessan*,  
the fishy depths of  
what he needs to know.

20 May 2010

= = = = =

The city was fallen from the beginning.  
Eden was no garden, had streets,  
an old geezer on his porch and you rolled  
your young delicious selves before his stringiness  
and he was the Serpent, the old botherer,  
the noontime pest and sundown lawyer—  
he told you tales of implausible pastorals  
goats and two rivers for each of you,  
made you fall in love with tilling soil  
with dung and groan and gravel  
the organic the so-called natural, the old  
man *was* nature and caught you in his coils.  
So you left the shining city meant for you.  
God was that young man who held a flaming torch  
so you could see to find your way back some day.

20 May 2010

## BIALY'S BIRD OF PARADISE

For a long time I thought the earth

was a bird, a blue one, wounded  
by a heavenhawk or who  
would dare to do that to

this bright broken business

and now the image answers information  
it always does, one picture  
spoils a thousand word,

nobody knows what I know  
nobody knows the bird it is  
the bird will be

savagely like a drunken sage  
indigo-winged wobbling up  
to be new

we hurt nothing.

We are only who we thought we are

and the bird thought too

but the bird was right.

Apocatastasis a feather fall'n.

22 May 2010